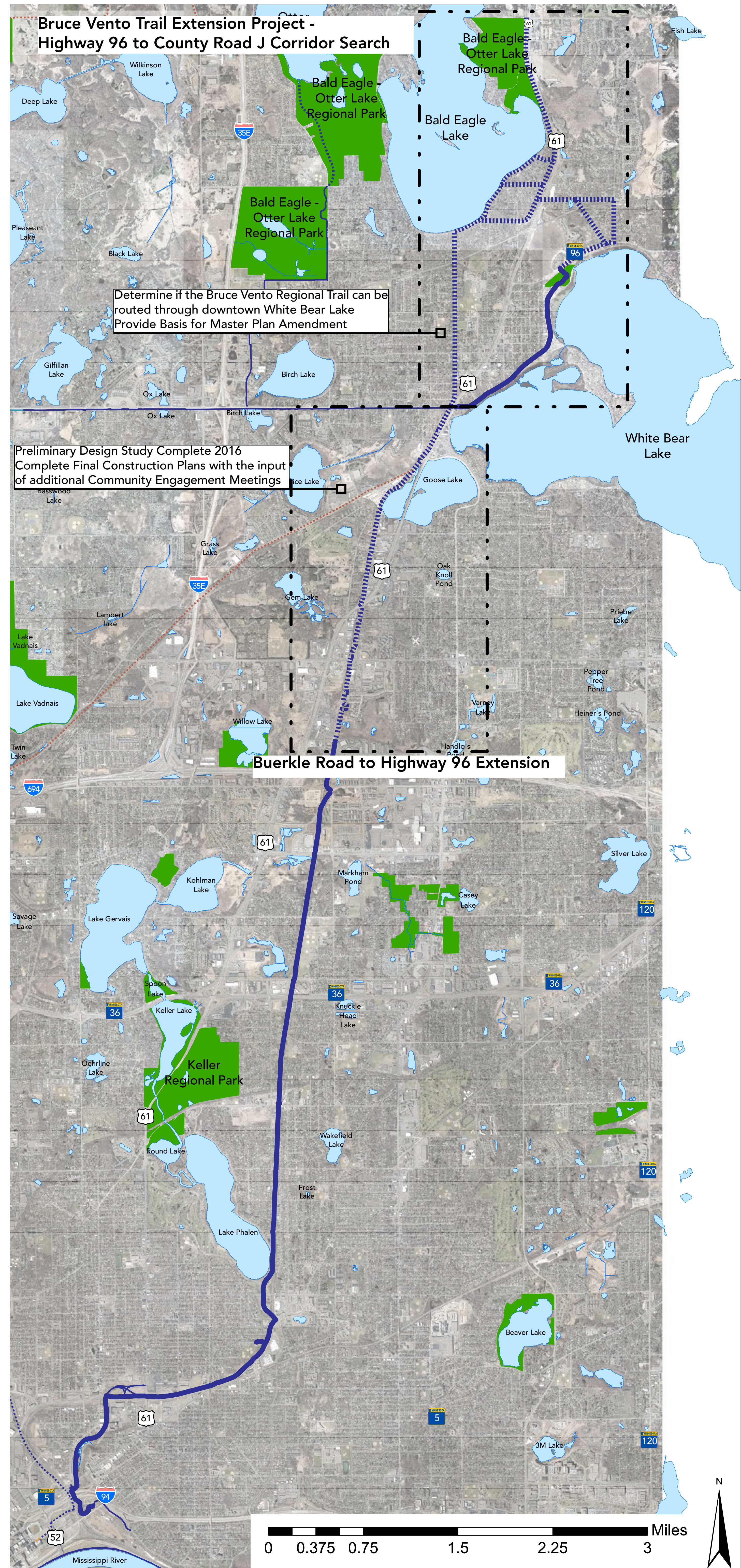


# Bruce Vento Regional Trail Corridor Search 2018

## Bruce Vento Regional Trail



## Bruce Vento Regional Trail - Master Planning Summary

### General Information:

Since the development of the Bruce Vento Trail Master Plan in 1993, the Bruce Vento Trail has been a highly popular multi-use trail corridor for Ramsey County residents. The trail corridor is thirteen-miles in length, and extends from the east side of downtown St. Paul to the north County line in White Bear Township through the cities of St. Paul, Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township. The southern seven-mile segment of the regional trail was completed in 2005 from downtown St. Paul to Buerkle Rd in White Bear Lake on former Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railway, the remaining six-miles of the trail was planned to be constructed on BNSF railway, up to the County line. However, this section of trail has remained undeveloped because this section of railway has remained active.

The planned trail alignment from downtown St. Paul northwestward to the north County line in White Bear Township as identified in the Bruce Vento Regional Trail master plan was proposed to be located within the center of the railway corridor since the railway corridor was planned for abandonment by BNSF. Several sections of BNSF rail right of way have been abandoned, and purchased by Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority for transit and trail use from downtown St. Paul to Buerkle Road in White Bear Lake.

In efforts to extend the regional trail to the north County line (County Road J), Ramsey County Parks & Recreation has initiated two regional trail projects.

- Project Area 1: Extension of regional from Buerkle Road to Highway 96
- Project Area 2: Extension of regional trail from Highway 96 to County Road J

Both projects once completed, will remove a significant barrier for northern communities in Ramsey County with Ramsey County for connection to the regional trail system in addition to many local trail connections as well. In addition, this project will complete a major gap in the National US Bike Route 41 (USBR 41) for connections north of Ramsey County to Duluth since the Bruce Vento Regional Trail is the designated USBR 41 route through Ramsey County.

Overall project Goals:

- Complete Extension of Trail from Buerkle Road to County Road J
- Complete implementation of Bruce Vento Regional Trail
- Provide main trail route for U.S. Bicycle Route 41 (USBR 41) through Ramsey County
- Provide trail connections to communities through the regional trail corridor and Rush Line BRT
- Additional community engagement meetings to seek input and design options
- Amend the Bruce Vento Regional Trail Master Plan to illustrate trail improvements, and trail re-alignment from Larpenteur Avenue to County Road J.
- Align with Regional Solicitation Funding Opportunities for implementation

### Bruce Vento Trail Extension Project - Highway 96 to County Road J:

The Bruce Vento Regional Trail search corridors are located between Highway 96 and County Road J (north county line) in the City of White Bear Lake and White Bear Township. The existing planned regional trail alignment as identified within the master plan is currently proposed within the center of the railway corridor however, this section of railroad is still active, and will not be able to accommodate a regional trail alignment due to continued use of the railway, and space constraints through downtown White Bear Lake.

Similar to the section of planned trail between Buerkle Road and Highway 96, few north south pedestrian trail corridors exist providing connections to other regional and local trail facilities. As a result, Ramsey County Parks and Recreation is initiated a planning study to refine alternative regional trail alignment corridors out of the rail right-of-way from Highway 96 to County Road J. This project will provide alternative trail alignments for the Bruce Vento Regional Trail

Project Goals:

- Determine if the Bruce Vento Regional Trail route can be routed through downtown White Bear Lake

- Refine potential alternate trail alignment search corridors

- Provide trail connections to Rush Line BRT and downtown White Bear Lake

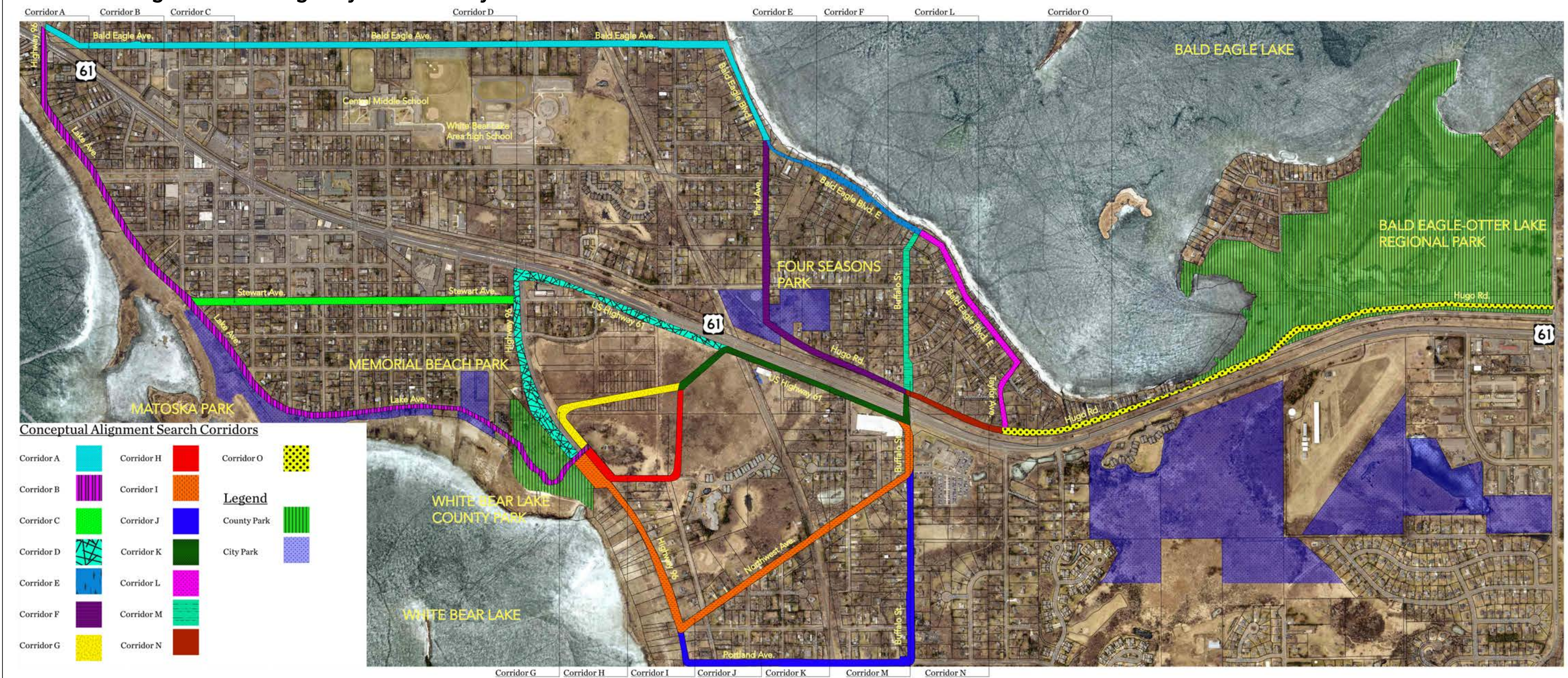
- Additional community engagement meeting will take place to seek input and design options, summer-fall 2018

- Provide basis for Master Plan Amendment for the Bruce Vento Regional Trail north of Highway 96.

Next Steps

- Additional community engagement meetings will take place to present alternative alignment options.
- Meeting 1: September 13, 2018 – Present proposed corridors for public input
- Meeting 2: October 4, 2018 – Present refined corridor from first meeting, and gain additional public input.
- Meeting 3: TBD – Provide preferred trail alignment corridor, and gain addition public input.

## Bruce Vento Regional Trail - Highway 96 to County Road J Search Corridors 2017



### Removal Of Search Corridors :

- Corridor C was removed due to the fact that there is an existing regional trail extremely close to this particular corridor. In addition the highly developed downtown area would have made constructing a new trail very difficult. It is also a less pedestrian focused area.
- Corridor D was removed as it requires the trail to back track on itself which is not an ideal situation
- Corridors G, H, and K were removed as they eventually travel through a wetland area which would require the construction of a boardwalk through the area. This is not an ideal situation for bicyclists, and as this is a part of National Bike Route 41 these routes were dismissed.



Bruce Vento Regional Trail Corridor Search 2018



Legend

Existing Regional Trail	Search Corridor H	Fishing Pier	
Proposed Regional Trail	Search Corridor I	Restrooms	
Search Corridor A	Search Corridor J	Municipal Sidewalks, Crosswalks, Bike Routes, Walking Paths	
Search Corridor B	Regional Park	Photo Inset with Analysis, See Board 3	
Search Corridor C	County Park		
Search Corridor D	Municipal Park		
Search Corridor E	Parking Lot		
Search Corridor F	Boat Launch		
Search Corridor G	Picnic Area		

Bruce Vento Regional Trail - Route Summaries

Corridors A, B, & C - South of Highway 61

The search corridors that travel south of Highway 61 offer a scenic route along White Bear Lake. The route would utilize the existing Lake Links Regional Trail which would help with cost reduction of the project. Lake Links Regional Trail is already a very popular destination among local residents and connecting it to the greater regional trail system would aid in increasing the popularity of the trail.

Pros

- Helps achieve the goal of connecting regional facilities as outlined in Thrive 2040
- Utilizes existing trail network reducing project costs
- Connects White Bear Lake County Park to the Regional Trail System

Corridors D, E, F, G, H, I, & J - North of Highway 61

The search corridors that travel north of Highway 61 offer an alternate route to the existing Lake Links Regional Trail. Enhancing the utility of Bald Eagle Boulevard E would be a main priority of the route. Having two trails along scenic lake fronts would be a boost to the local trails system. Both routes eventually find their way through Bald Eagle - Otter Lake Regional Park, however the option N of Highway 61 boasts the least amount of major highway crossings and a more continuous trail along Bald Eagle Lake.

Pros

- Mimics the Lake Links Regional Trail, offering a second lake shore destination trail in the local community
- Minimizes major highway crossings
- Provides connections to Central Middle School, White Bear Lake Area High School, and possibly Four Seasons Park
- The route is already used by local pedestrians and bicyclists, and would provide a safer option to using Bald Eagle Boulevard E



# Bruce Vento Regional Trail Corridor Search 2018

## Corridor A

Corridor A follows Lake Avenue utilizing the existing Lake Links Regional Trail. Lake Avenue is a one-way street with a generous shoulder on the White Bear Lake side which is where the existing trail lies.

### Pros

- Lake Links Regional Trail is already build adjacent to Lake Avenue
- Provides a more cost efficient method of extending the Bruce Vento Trail through this corridor
- Ample shoulder space along the trail
- Would Connect the Bruce Vento to the Lake Links Trail as well as other parks and beaches

### Cons

- Some wetlands and slopes
- Private property along parts of the shoulder



Corridor A south of the Lake Avenue and Highway 96 intersection. There is an existing lamp post that indicates the path is a bike route. The path could benefit from striping to separate pedestrians and cyclists.



Pedestrian crossings along Lake Avenue are punctuated by lamps, plantings and a median between the trail and the street.



Lake Links Trail is a popular destination for many people including pedestrians, bicyclists, and artists. The trail provides a unique opportunity to promote these recreational aspects.



Corridor A connects to a number of public beaches and parks. Memorial Beach and bathroom facility shown.



Corridor A connection to White Bear Lake County park. The existing trail connection is shown.

## Corridor D

Corridor D begins at the intersection of Highways 96 & 61 running North along Bald Eagle Avenue. The Corridor follows a predominantly residential route with the notable exceptions of Central Middle School and White Bear Lake Area High School.

### Pros

- A good amount of shoulder space to allow for a trail corridor to exist

### Cons

- Bald Eagle Avenue is lined with utility poles and fire hydrants leading to the belief that some utilities will need to be moved
- The residential area is also heavily populated with driveways, mailboxes and other private property items that impede trail development
- There are some sloped areas and narrow shoulders located along the corridor



Existing sidewalk and ample shoulder space along corridor D extends from the intersection of Bald Eagle Avenue and Highway 96 to Bald Eagle Avenue and 4th Street.



After 4th Street, shoulder space increases dramatically along Corridor D.



Ample Space along Bald Eagle Avenue at Central Middle School provides an opportunity to develop shared parking along the trail.



Shoulder space narrows and drainage swales begin to form heading north along Bald Eagle Avenue after the 12th Street intersection.



Railroad crossing along Bald Eagle Avenue presents a hazard. There are also side slopes, encroaching trees, and wetlands to contend with in this area.



Intersection of Bald Eagle Avenue and Bald Eagle Boulevard E. The entire corridor Width becomes constricted in this area.

## Corridor J

Corridor J follows Hugo Road from the intersection of Taylor Avenue and Hugo Road heading North along the west side of Highway 61 and the BNSF Railway all the way to the county line at County Road J. This corridor has been identified as the preferred route to the county line as it connects the regional trail to Bald Eagle - Otter Lake Regional Park. Connections between regional parks and trails is one main goal of Thrive 2040.

### Pros

- Connects the regional trail to Bald Eagle - Otter Lake Regional Park
- Wide shoulders would accommodate a separated trail along most of Hugo Road
- This route is already utilized by pedestrians and bicyclists to access the regional park

### Cons

- Close to the BNSF Railway
- Steep slopes along some sections, however there is still a wide shoulder to work with
- Narrow shoulders along small stretches
- A few wetlands and stormwater drainage structures along Hugo Road

## Corridor B

Corridor B continues from Corridor A heading East on Highway 96, then follows Northwest Avenue to Buffalo Street. This corridor runs primarily though a residential area.

### Pros

- Connects the existing Lake Links Regional Trail to an existing controlled intersection at Buffalo Street and Highway 61
- Decent amount of shoulder space to establish a trail
- The route is already utilized by bicyclists

### Cons

- Fast moving cars along highway 96
- There are many utility poles, mailboxes, driveways, wetlands, limited shoulder space, etc. along Northwest Avenue making trail establishment difficult



Corridor B has sloping shoulders and drainage swales along Northwest Avenue which would need to be mitigated for trail development.



Intersection of Northwest Avenue and Buffalo Street. Ample shoulder space, but many obstacles to contend with.



Buffalo Street lacks a designated shoulder, however there is a lot of space to develop a separated trail.

## Corridor E

Corridor E continues from Corridor D at the intersection of Bald Eagle Boulevard East and Park Avenue, continuing along Bald Eagle Boulevard East to Buffalo Street. The corridor passes through a highly residential neighborhood along Bald Eagle Lake.

### Pros

- Provides a scenic view of Bald Eagle Lake
- Currently utilized by pedestrians and bicyclists
- Potential to convert Bald Eagle Boulevard East to a one-way road mimicking Lake Avenue and the Lake Links Regional Trail

### Cons

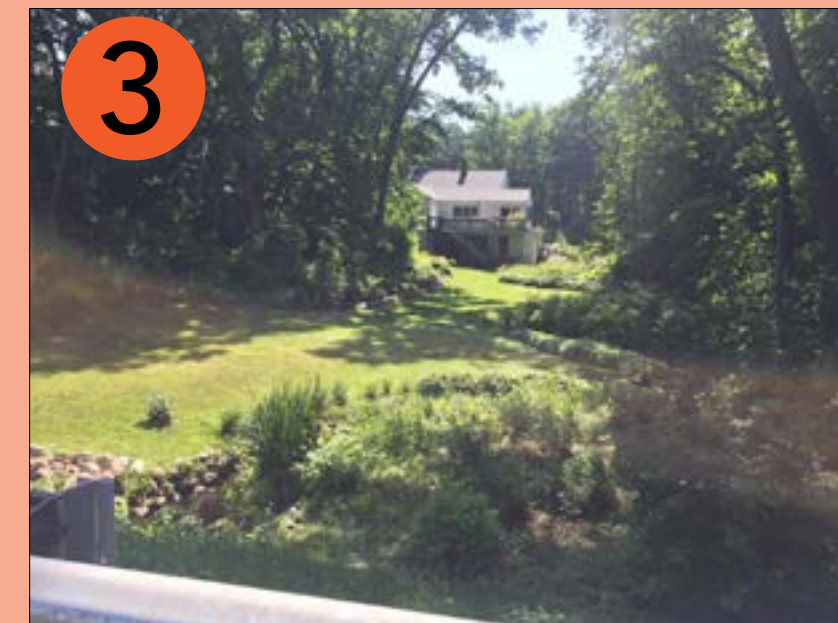
- Narrow to no shoulder space as the road alignment is currently utilized
- Many steep slopes, walls, gardens, driveways, and other residential obstacles to overcome



Corridor E is constrained by limited shoulder space along with sloping sides, trees, walls, gardens and other residential obstacles.



Bicyclists utilizing the road, views of Bald Eagle Lake make this a popular route for local residents.



A creek/drainage swale from the residential neighborhood constrains the corridor at this point.

## Corridor G

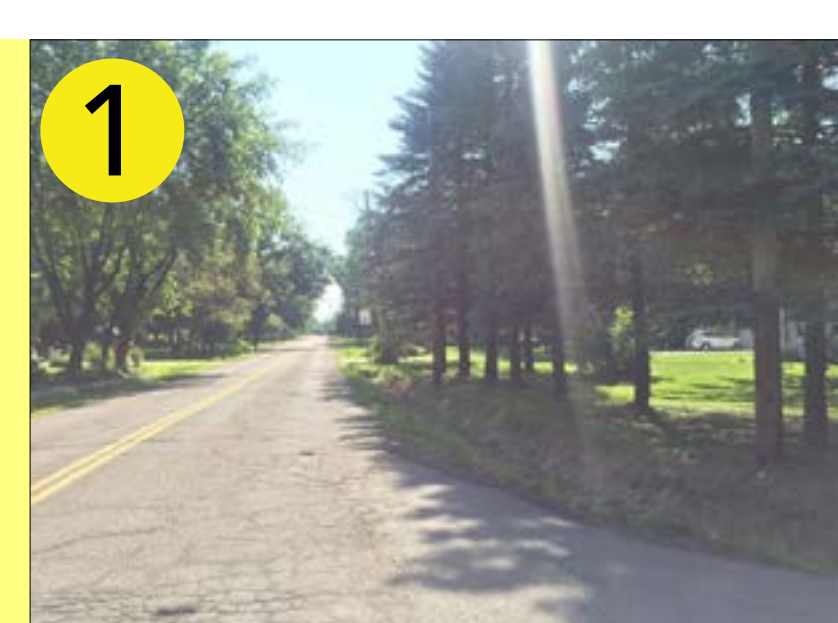
Corridor G begins at the intersection of Bald Eagle Boulevard East and Buffalo Street heading east to Hugo Road, which provides an alternative to Corridor H.

### Pros

- Connects to Hugo Road, providing an alternate route to Corridor H

### Cons

- Limited shoulder space
- Utility poles, sloping sides, and stone walls are some of the obstacles that need to be overcome



Trees, driveways, drainage swales along with various obstacles along Buffalo Street make this corridor less than ideal.

## Corridor I

Corridor N follows Hugo Road from the intersection of Buffalo Street and Hugo Road to Taylor Avenue, providing another option on the West side of Highway 61.

### Pros

- Wide Shoulder space would accommodate a separated trail

### Cons

- Close to the BNSF Railway



Wide shoulders and few obstructions along Hugo Road would provide for a separated trail facility.

## Corridor C

Corridor C continues from Corridor I at the intersection of Highway 96 and Northwest Avenue to the intersection of Highway 96 and Portland Avenue. The corridor follows Portland Avenue heading North to Buffalo Street before turning West and continuing to Highway 61.

### Pros

- A good amount of shoulder space along Portland Avenue
- Few slopes and relatively flat

### Cons

- Utility poles, mailboxes, driveways, wetlands, and drainage systems impede trail development
- Limited shoulder space in some areas



A good amount of shoulder space along Corridor C. Drainage swales would need attention along Portland Avenue



A vacant lot and right of way owned by the Township of White Bear Lake provide an opportunity to develop a joint trail head.



Wide shoulders along Buffalo Street provide the opportunity for a separated trail facility.

## Corridor F

Corridor continues from corridor D at the intersection of Bald Eagle Avenue East and Park Avenue heading east along Park Avenue to Hugo Road then continuing north to the intersection of Hugo Road and Buffalo Street.

### Pros

- Connects the trail to Four Seasons Park
- There is plenty of shoulder space along Hugo Road

### Cons

- Utility poles, property lines, driveways and other residential obstacles constrict the trail corridor
- Shoulder space is limited along Park Avenue



Limited shoulder space, driveways, and trees are just some of the obstacles present in Corridor F.



Four Seasons Park provides additional parking and trailhead services. Utility poles are an obstruction to the trail corridor.



Hugo Road provides enough shoulder space to accommodate a separated trail.

## Corridor H

Corridor L heads north from the intersection of Bald Eagle Boulevard East and Buffalo Street continuing from Corridor E. The route then turns east onto Taylor Avenue to the intersection of Taylor Avenue and Hugo Road.

### Pros

- Continues to utilize the scenic views of Bald Eagle Lake from Bald Eagle Boulevard East
- Shaded route
- The corridor is currently accessed by pedestrians and bicyclists for the scenic route along Bald Eagle Lake

### Cons

- Narrow street with a limited shoulder
- Steep slopes on both sides along with gardens, driveways, mail boxes, utility poles and other obstacles obstruct the route of the trail



1) Side slopes, walls and encroaching vegetation constrict the corridor.



2) Stormwater drains, driveways, and other residential obstacles are present throughout the corridor.



3) Taylor Avenue is a narrow road, with vegetated sides making a trail corridor more difficult.